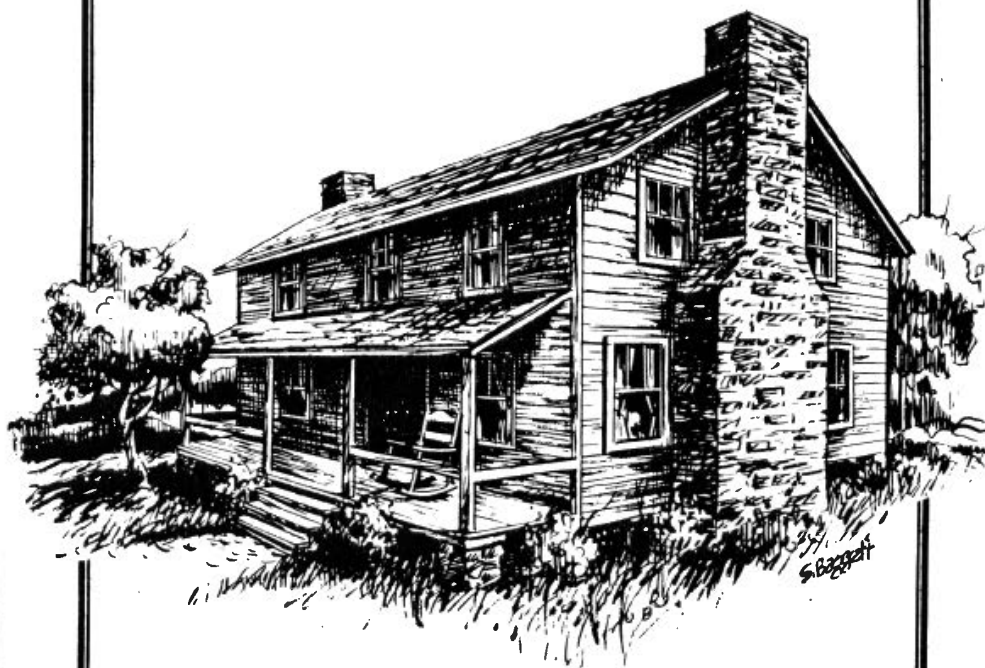


PTOMEY

THE PTOMEY FAMILY OF ALABAMA



Kyser Cowart Ptomey

The Ptomey Family of Alabama

And the Allied Families of
Blankenship, Melton, Kyser
and Cowart, Being Notes,
Comments, and Memoires Compiled

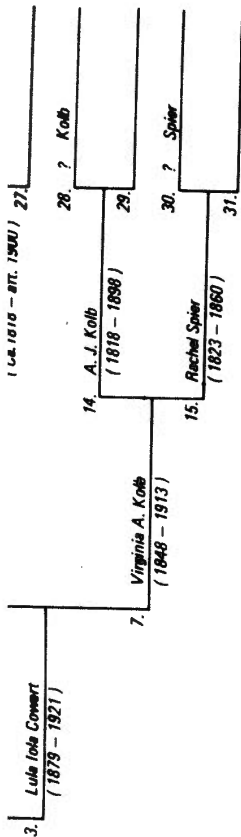
By
Kyser Cowart Ptomey



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POLYANTHOS

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EZEKIEL COWART,
GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER OF
LULA IOLA COWART

Pascagoula Public Library
Local History & Genealogy Dept.
Ptomey Family

Ezekiel Cowart ¹⁻² ca. 1730 ca. 1823	Elizabeth Barfield ¹ ca. 1732 ?
Married ca. 1768	
Isham (Hiram) ¹⁻²⁻⁴ ca. 1770 m. Susannah Miller ¹	ca. 1825
Jesse ¹⁻⁴⁻⁵ ca. 1772 m. Penelope Dear ¹	ca. 1842
Edward ¹⁻⁴⁻⁵ ca. 1774 m. ?, large family ¹	?
Ezekiel ¹⁻⁴ ca. 1776 m. ?, large family ¹	?
James ¹⁻³⁻⁵⁻⁶ 9/8/1778 m. Charlotte Allred ¹	1/21/1846 ¹
Wiley ¹⁻⁴⁻⁵ ca. 1780 m. Sally Laird ¹	ca. 1831
Needham ¹ ? m. Mary Taylor ¹	?
John ¹⁻³⁻⁴ ? m. Lucy Bates ¹	?
Zelpha ¹ ? m. Charles Moody ¹	?
Jemima ¹ ? m. ? Raimond ¹	?
Elizabeth ¹ ? m. John Drummonds ¹	?

¹Marion and Nancy Cowart Brunson, *A History of Our Cowart Family* (N.p., n. pub., 1967) pp 1, 2. Hereinafter referred to as, *Our Cowart Family*. Book in possession of K. C. Ptomey.

²1790 U.S. Census, Georgetown District, North Carolina, p 507. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in Ezekiel Cowart file.

³Ronald Vern Jackson and Gary Ronald Teeple (eds.) *South Carolina 1810 Census Index* (Bountiful, Utah: Accelerated Indexing Systems, 1976), p 19. Photocopy of p 19 in Ezekiel Cowart file.

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⁴1820 U.S. Census, Newton County, Ga., p 47A.
National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library, Houston,
Tex. Copy of p 47A in Ezekiel Cowart file.

⁵1830 U.S. Census, Newton County, Ga., pp 47, 51,
53. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library,
Houston, Tex. Copy of 47, 51, 53 in Ezekiel Cowart
file.

⁶1840 U.S. Census, Pike County, Ala., p 376.
National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library, Houston,
Tex. Copy in Ezekiel Cowart file.

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ty, Ga., p 47A.
Library, Houston,
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ty, Ga., pp 47, 51,
yton Library,
Ezekiel Cowart

, Ala., p 376.
Library, Houston,

WILEY COWART,

SON OF

EZEKIEL COWART AND

ELIZABETH BARFIELD

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Ptomey Family

Wiley Cowart¹⁻²⁻³
ca. 1780 ca. 1831

Sally Laird¹⁻²⁻³
ca. 1780 ca. 1831

Married ca. 1805

Laird ¹	?	died young
William ¹	?	?
John ¹⁻²⁻⁴⁻⁵⁻⁶⁻⁷	11/12/1816 m. Elizabeth Dillard	3/22/1882
Giles ¹	ca. 1819 did not marry	8/23/1843
Isham ¹	? m. ?	?
James ¹	? m. Caroline Buckalew	?
Jesse Asbury ¹⁻⁸	11/22/1827 m. Lydia L. Speir	11/26/1906

¹Our Cowart Family, *Supra.* p 6. Copy of p 6 in Ezekiel Cowart file.

²1820 U.S. Census, Jackson County, Miss. p 479. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton, Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in Ezekiel Cowart file.

³1830 U.S. Census, Newton County, Ga., *Supra.* p 47. Copy in Ezekiel Cowart file.

⁴Cowart family Bible. Original pages in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁵1850 U.S. Census, Pike County, Ala., *Supra.* p 241, 245. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁶1860 U.S. Census, Butler County, Ala. p 51. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton, Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁷1870 U.S. Census, Monroe County, Ala. p 503. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton, Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁸"TVGS Ancestor Chart #25" in *A Special Edition of Valley Leaves, A quarterly Publication of The Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society, Inc.* (1979) Clayton Library, Ala. Per., Houston, Tex. Copy of Chart #25 in Wiley Cowart file.

JOHN COWART,
SON OF
WILEY COWART AND
SALLY LAIRD

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Ptomey Family

John Cowart ¹⁻⁴⁻⁵⁻⁶⁻⁷	Elizabeth Dillard ¹⁻⁴⁻⁵⁻⁶⁻⁷
11/22/1816 5/22/1882	4/28/1819 after 1900

Married 11/29/1846²

Marcella Florence ⁴⁻⁵	11/20/1848	after 1900
m. Daniel W. Howell		
Theophilus Almarine ³⁻⁵⁻⁶	5/25/1851	9/12/1903
m. Virginia Kolb		
Alonzo Oscar ⁵	4/20/1853	9/26/1862 ¹
Sara Alfredonia	1/20/1855	?
Caroline ⁵⁻⁶⁻⁷		
Wiley Eugene Quitman ⁵	6/3/1860	5/21/1862 ¹
Norvilla Blanche ⁶⁻⁷	2/4/1863	?
m. B. F. Johnson		

¹Cowart family Bible. *Supra.* Original pp in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

²"Marriage Certificate" Probate Court, Pike County, Ala. M. Book (1830-1849) p 298. Photocopy in John Cowart file.

³Headstone, Witherington Cemetery, Evergreen, Ala. Personal inspection. Picture in cemetery file.

⁴1850 U.S. Census, Pike County, Ala. *Supra.* p 241. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁵1860 U.S. Census, Butler County, Ala. *Supra.* p 51. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁶1870 U.S. Census, Monroe County, Ala. *Supra.* p 503. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁷1880 U.S. Census, Monroe County, Ala. p 368. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in John Cowart file.

⁸1900 U.S. Census, Conecuh County, Ala. p 247. National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in John Cowart file.

THEOPHILUS ALMARINE COWART,

SON OF

JOHN COWART AND

ELIZABETH DILLARD

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Local History & Genealogy Dept.
Ptomey Family

Theophilus Almarine Cowart¹⁻⁴⁻⁵⁻⁶⁻⁷ Virginia A. Kolb²⁻⁶⁻⁷
5/25/1851¹ 9/12/1903¹⁻² 1/17/1848¹ 10/13/1913¹⁻²
5/17/1850² 1/12/1853²

Married 11/22/1874¹⁻⁸

Richard Escar ³	10/13/1875	1/26/1938 ³
	m. Alma Payne	
Beulah ¹	7/15/1877	7/6/1878 ¹
Lula Iola ¹⁻⁶⁻⁷	9/25/1879	2/20/1921 ¹⁻²
	m. George Kyser Ptomey	
Mamie Nevada ¹⁻⁶⁻⁷	3/4/1882	1/?/1936
	m. W. A. Fountain	
Aubrey Kolb ¹⁻⁶⁻⁷	8/27/1884	8/1/1966 ²
	m. Lois Leysath	
Elly Hubbard ¹⁻⁶⁻⁷	11/12/1890	5/17/1960 ²
	m. Ella Yow	

¹Cowart family Bible, *Supra*. Original pp in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

²Headstones, Witherington Cemetery, Evergreen, Ala. Personal inspection. Pictures in cemetery file.

³Mary Hickman (Mrs. Fred M.) Cowart. Letters and notes in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁴1860 U.S. Census, Butler, County, Ala. *Supra*.
p 51. Copy in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁵1870 U.S. Census, Butler County, Ala. *Supra*.
p 503. Copy in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁶1880 U.S. Census, Monroe County, Ala. *Supra*.
p B10. Copy in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁷1900 U.S. Census, Wilcox County, Ala. p B65.
National Archives Microfilm, Clayton Library, Houston, Tex. Copy in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁸"Marriage Certificate" (1874) Probate Court, Butler County, Ala. Photocopy in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

GEORGE KYSER PTOMEY,

SON OF

JOHN W. PTOMEY AND

MARTHA A. KYSER

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Ptomey Family

George Kyser Ptomey¹⁻²
17/1881 11/12/1941⁵

Lula Iola Cowart¹⁻²⁻⁴
9/25/1879 2/20/1921⁵

Married 2/1/1906⁶

Mildred Maurine¹ 10/20/1906

Virginia Louise¹ 6/3/1910

Kyser Cowart¹⁻⁷ 4/12/1915

Mildred Maurine Ptomey⁸
10/20/1906

Roy Leigh
?

Married 10/25/1925
Divorced 1928

Bettye 1/15/1927
(adopted by Gust T. Magnuson)

Mildred Maurine Ptomey Leigh⁸
10/20/1906

Gust T. Magnuson
9/18/1900

2nd Married 6/20/1931⁹

Jane 2/8/1936

Bettye Magnuson¹⁰
1/25/1927

William H. Smith
?

Married 8/27/1946

Linda 3/13/1949

Vicki 3/27/1952

Becky 4/13/1954

Linda Smith
3/13/1949

Phillip Atchison
?

Married 3/?/1972

Christopher A. 12/17/1973

Jane Magnuson
2/8/1936

William E. Knighton
?

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Ptomey Family

Married 7/5/1952

Diane	10/1/1954
Sharon	8/22/1958

Diane Knighton 10/1/1954	Wayne Robinson
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Married 11/17/1980

Kacy Anne	6/12/1982
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Mildred Maurine Ptomey, whom I called "Sister," was born at the home of my father's sister, Lucretia Ptomey Sills, in PineApple.

Our family moved to Birmingham when Mildred was twelve years old and three years later, when she was fifteen years old, Mama died. Mildred, being the oldest, became Daddy's helper and a mother to me. Louise was eleven years old, and she helped Mildred as best she could.

In 1924 our father married Alice Tomlinson, and in 1925 we moved to Fairfield where Mildred attended high school. After leaving school she worked in Fairfield, and when she was nineteen years old, she married Roy Leigh. He was with the T. C. I. division of the U. S. Steel Company and was from Ohio.

Bettye, Mildred's first daughter, was born at the T.C.I. Hospital in Fairfield. After her divorce from Roy Leigh, Mildred worked for Aunt Cile and supported herself until she married Gust T. Magnuson in 1931. Aunt Cile owned and operated a restaurant in the B.A.C. building in Birmingham. Mabel Snow, the daughter of one of Aunt Cile's neighbors, also worked for Aunt Cile. Mable and Mildred were friends, and Mable introduced her to Gust Magnuson. Mable was dating Gunner Magnuson, Gust's brother. Mabel married Gunner and Mildred married Gust.

Gust was employed by the Southern Stave Saw Company which was owned by his brother, John. The company makes and repairs barrel stave saws. Gust is a machinist and is an expert in the stave saw field. This type of work is highly specialized; and it is difficult to find someone qualified to do this work, so even though Gust is retired and eighty-two years old, he continues to work part time.

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6/3/1910

Peggy Lou:

Kay

Peggy Loui
10/31/1929

Joan Eliza

Pascagoula Public Library
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Ptomey Family

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Gust and Mildred owned a home in Druid Hills, north of Birmingham, and they lived there for more than twenty-five years. Jane, their daughter, was born there. Bettye and Jane both grew up in Druid Hills.

Bettye married William H. Smith and has three daughters, whom she reared after her divorce. She did not remarry.

Jane and her husband William Knighton were married when Jane was sixteen, and they have been married for thirty years and have two daughters. Diane graduated from the University of Alabama and taught school. She is married and has a baby daughter. Sharon graduated from Auburn University in pharmacy and to date has not married.

Bettye and Jane are very close, and there was never any partiality shown between them by Gust or Mildred. Both Bettye and Jane adore their parents, and through the years have maintained a warm relationship.

Mildred and Louise have always been substitute mothers to me. At one time or another while I was growing up, I lived with them. They took care of me, and gave me love and understanding. I was living with Gust and Mildred when I married.

Mildred and Gust are long time members of the Presbyterian Church. They were members of the Sixth Avenue Presbyterian Church, and when it moved and became the Brookwood Presbyterian Church at Mountain Brook, they continued their membership. Bettye and Jane and their families are also Presbyterian.

Virginia Louise Ptomey ¹¹	Burbur Mason Kinman
6/3/1910	1/16/1902 9/1/82

Married 7/21/1928¹²

Peggy Louise	10/31/1929
Kay	3/11/1941

Peggy Louise Kinman ¹¹	Bill Joseph Dunn
10/31/1929	?

Married 11/18/1947

Joan Elizabeth	11/2/1959
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Ptomey Family

Jo Ann 3/17/1961

Stephen Mark 9/21/1962

Kay Kinman¹¹
3/11/1941

Thomas A. Marler
?

Married 11/24/1960
Divorced ?

Lori 12/26/1964

Kay Kinman Marler
3/11/1941

Steve Baggett
?

2nd Married 12/2/1970

Amy 11/7/1972

Virginia Louise Ptomey, my younger sister, whom Mildred and I always called "Vena," was born while Daddy and Mama were living in Conecuh County, north of Evergreen, on the McCrory place. When she was a year old, the family moved back to the Ptomey place in PineApple. We moved to Birmingham when Louise was eight years old. She attended school in Ensley until 1925, when we moved to Fairfield, and there she attended Fairfield High School.

In her senior year of high school at the age of 18, she married Burbur Mason Kinman. She was working for Southern Bell Telephone Company as a long distance operator, and she continued to work until her daughter Peggy Louise was born.

Peggy was born at the T.C.I. hospital in Fairfield when Burbur and Louise were living in Ensley. When Peggy was a small child the family moved to Greenwood, near Bessemer, and she grew up there. She graduated from Bessemer High School and married shortly thereafter when she was nineteen years old. She and her husband Bill Dunn have two daughters and one son. Bill worked at the Pullman plant at Bessemer when they married, but because of the irregularity of the work, he obtained a job in the photo refinishing field and was in this business for a number of years. Bill and Peggy now live in Anniston, Alabama.

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1/31/1942

Christopher

Patricia Da

Pascagoula Public Library
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Ptomey Family

Thomas A. Marler

Kay, who is almost twelve years younger than Peggy, was also born at the hospital in Fairfield which was then called Lloyd Noland Hospital. She was reared in Greenwood and graduated from Bessemer High School. She married Thomas Marler who was attending Samford University. They had one daughter, Lori, and after he received his degree he and Kay were divorced. Kay has worked for the Bessemer Board of Education for a number of years. In 1970, Kay married Steve Baggett and they have one daughter Amy.

Steve Baggett

Burbur worked for the U. S. Steel, Fairfield Works, for more than forty years and retired in 1967. He was a supervisor in the plant maintenance division, and as a consequence, he worked at least part time during the entire depression. For several years the plant was closed, and most of the employees were laid off. Burbur's work entailed the protection of the machinery and property even though the plant was not operating, and so he was needed until the plant resumed operation.

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Louise and Burbur are devoted Baptist, as are their daughters. Burbur served on the Board of Deacons and was Treasurer of the Canan Baptist Church. Louise taught a ladies class in Sunday School for years.

Louise, Mildred, and I have always been very close. In my youth Mildred and Gust and Louise and Burbur provided a home for me and they were always kind, understanding, and helpful.

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Kyser Cowart Ptomey ¹³
4/12/1915¹⁵

Hazel Alice Ogletree
3/23/1915¹⁵

Married 3/25/1938¹⁴

Kyser Cowart, Jr. 1/31/1942¹⁵

Edward Ogletree 9/10/1946¹⁵

Susan 5/13/1951¹⁵

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Kyser Cowart Ptomey, Jr. ¹³
1/31/1942

Elizabeth Daniel
10/13/1943

Married 8/7/1963

Christopher Kyser 1/15/1968

Patricia Daniel 1/31/1970

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Edward Ogletree Ptomey¹³
9/10/1946

Sukrai Pomsukan
ca. 1947

Married 5/5/1973¹⁶
Divorced 8/18/1981¹⁷

No children

Edward Ogletree Ptomey¹³
9/10/1946

Sara Kathryn Robinson
12/4/1956

2nd Married 10/3/1981¹⁸

No children

Susan Ptomey¹³
5/13/1951

William Gilbert Hargett
1/9/1950

Married 5/12/1973

Pelham Clay

8/12/1977

Carol Key

8/14/1980

Kyser Cowart Ptomey was born at the John Ptomey place in PineApple, Alabama, and at the age of three moved with the family to Birmingham. I grew up in Ensley, a suburb of Birmingham, and graduated from Ensley High School in 1933. I received the LLB degree from Birmingham School of Law in 1939.

I was employed by the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company (a multiline insurance and bonding company) in 1935. I was Claim Adjuster, Special Agent, and Assistant Manager of the Birmingham Branch Office. From 1966 to 1968, I was Manager of the Lansing, Michigan Branch Office and from 1968 until retirement, was Manager of the Houston Branch Office.

I married Hazel Alice Ogletree at the home of Mr. A. L. Woods, minister of the First Methodist Church of Ensley. Hazel was born at Sipsey, Walker County, Alabama, and is the daughter of Dolby Newton Ogletree and Lula Martin Ogletree. She grew up near Branchville, Alabama and attended St. Clair County High School. Hazel and I are members of the First Presbyterian Church of Houston.

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Ptomey Family

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K. C. Ptomey, Jr., was born at the West End Baptist Hospital in Birmingham. He attended high school two years at Murphy High School in Mobile and graduated from Shades Valley High School, Homewood, Alabama. He received B. A. degree in Philosophy from Southwestern at Memphis, June 1963. He was president of the Honor Council, president of K. A. fraternity, and was chosen to Southwestern Hall of Fame. He received his masters degree in Theology at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in June 1966. K. C., Jr., was awarded his Doctor of Ministry by McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago in August 1980. From July 1966 to 1970, he was minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Collierville, Tennessee; from 1970 to 1979 was minister of the Presbyterian Church of Henderson, Texas, and from 1979 to 1981 was minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Arlington, Texas. Since 1981 has been the minister of Westminister Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Tennessee.

K. C., Jr., married Elizabeth Daniel, daughter of Victor Daniel and Margie Bailey Daniel, at the First Presbyterian Church, Gulfport, Mississippi. Their son, Christopher Kyser, was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and their daughter, Patricia Daniel, was also born in Memphis.

Edward Ogletree Ptomey was born at the Hillcrest Infirmary in Andalusia, Alabama. He attended Berry High School, in Birmingham, from 1962 until 1966 when he joined the U. S. Air Force. He was in Thailand and VietNam for five years. While in Thailand, he married Sukrai Pomsukan, and she came to the United States with him, but did not like living here and returned home in 1975. They were divorced in 1981.

On October 3, 1981, Ed married Sara Kathryn Robinson at the home of K. C. and Hazel Ptomey, in Houston. Ed and Sara live in Houston where Ed is employed by an equipment rental company, and Sara is a department head at Sakowitz, which is a large department store.

Susan Ptomey was born at the Provident Hospital in Mobile, Alabama. She attended Berry High School in Birmingham, East Lansing High School in Michigan, and graduated from Bellaire High School in Houston in June 1969. Susan attended the University of Alabama from 1969 to 1973 where she majored in Fashion Design and Special Education.

Susan married William Gilbert Hargett, son of Pelham Hargett and Carol Key Hargett, of Russellville, Alabama,

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Ptomey Family**

at the First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham. William (Billy) has a Masters Degree in Geology from the University of Alabama and is employed as a division geologist by Tennaco Production Company at Lafayette, Louisiana. Billy and Susan are members of the Lafayette Presbyteian Church.

Pelham Clay and Carol Key were both born while Billy and Susan were living in Houston prior to their move to Lafayette.

George Kyser Ptomey¹⁻²
2/7/1881 11/12/1941

Alice Tomlinson¹⁹
6/24/1896

2nd Married 3/24/1924

Harlan Leigh

10/11/1926

Harlan Leigh²⁰
10/11/1926

Frances Palmer
1/27/1927

Married 3/16/1950

Nancy Leigh

9/16/1953

Sarah Ruth

11/15/1955

Joseph Harlan

7/8/1959

Nancy Leigh Ptomey
9/16/1953

Richard Edward Jones
8/24/1952

Married 6/9/1973

Christopher Allen

3/17/1979

Sarah Ruth Ptomey
11/15/1955

Nathaniel Waller III
7/30/1954

Married 7/10/1976

Emily Allison

2/18/1980

Harlan Leigh Ptomey, son of Alice Tomlinson and my father, was born at the T.C.I. Hospital at Fairfield when we were living at 502 Oak Place in Fairfield. In 1930, after my father was laid off during the depression,

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Ptomey Family

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he, his wife Alice, and Harlan moved to a farm in Evergreen where Harlan spent his childhood. He was about fifteen years old when our father died. Harlan and his mother remained in Evergreen, and her parents, Jep and Fanny Tomlinson, who were old and unable to care for themselves, moved into the house with Mother and Harlan and they took care of them.

Harlan attended the University of Alabama. He married Frances Palmer in Andalusia after he went to work for Taylor Auto Parts Company in Andalusia. After leaving Taylor Auto Parts, Harlan was employed by the U.S. Postal Service and worked out of the Andalusia Post Office for several years. He is at present Postmaster at Castleberry, Alabama. Frances has been employed by the School Board of Andalusia for a number of years.

Nancy Ptomey graduated from Troy University and taught school before she married. Sara also graduated from Troy and is a registered nurse. She and her husband live at Mobile, and Nancy and her husband live in Andalusia.

Joe attended Troy University and is employed by the Highway Department, State of Alabama, as a highway patrolman. He is not married (1982).

¹Personal family records of P. Lucile Ptomey Cowden. *Supra*. Photocopies in John W. Ptomey file.

²1900 U.S. Census, Wilcox County, Ala. *Supra*. p 55. Copy in John W. Ptomey file.

³Cowart family Bible. Original pages in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁴1900 U.S. Census, Wilcox County, Ala. *Supra*. p B65. Copy in Theophilus A. Cowart file.

⁵Headstones, Witherington Cemetery, Evergreen, Ala. Personal inspection. Pictures in cemetery file.

⁶"Marriage Certificate" (1906) Probate Court, Conecuh County, Ala. Photocopy in George Kyser Ptomey file.

⁷"Birth Certificate" Bureau of Vital Statistics, State of Ala., Montgomery, Ala. Photocopy in Kyser Cowart Ptomey file.

⁸Kyser Cowart Ptomey, personal knowledge.

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⁹"Marriage Certificate" (1931) Probate Court Jefferson County, Ala. Photocopy in George Kyser Ptomey file.

¹⁰Mildred Ptomey Magnuson, personal knowledge. Notes in George Kyser Ptomey file.

¹¹Louise Ptomey Kinman, personal knowledge. Notes in George Kyser Ptomey file.

¹²"Marriage Certificate" (1928) Probate Court, Jefferson County, Ala. Photocopy in George Kyser Ptomey file.

¹³Hazel Ogletree Ptomey, personal knowledge. Notes in Kyser Cowart Ptomey file.

¹⁴"Marriage Certificate" (1938) Probate Court, Jefferson County, Ala. Photocopy in Kyser Cowart Ptomey file.

¹⁵"Birth Certificate" Bureau of Vital Statistics, State of Ala., Montgomery, Ala. Photocopy in Kyser Cowart Ptomey file.

¹⁶"Marriage Certificate" (1973) Marriage records, Bangkok, Thailand. Photocopy in Edward O. Ptomey file.

¹⁷"Divorce Decree" File 81-11232, Family District Court, Harris County, Tex. Photocopy in Edward O. Ptomey file.

¹⁸"Marriage Certificate" (1981) County Clerk Office, Harris County, Tex. Photocopy in Edward O. Ptomey file.

¹⁹1900 U.S. Census, Conecuh County, Ala. *Supra.* p 330. Copy in George Kyser Ptomey file.

²⁰Harlan Leigh Ptomey, personal knowledge. Notes in George Kyser Ptomey.

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George Kyser Ptomey, my father, was the first son of John W. and Martha A. Ptomey. He was born at the Ptomey place and grew up there on the farm east of the town of PineApple. He and his brother J. D., who was five years younger, grew up together working on the farm and enjoying all the pleasures of boys growing up in the country. They especially enjoyed hunting and fishing. Daddy was an expert with the shotgun (Uncle J. D. claimed that Daddy was the best shot in the county). He liked to hunt rabbits, squirrels, and quail. His favorite foods were quail and fried fresh fish.

As teenagers, Daddy and Uncle J. D. courted the girls around PineApple. Late at night they had to walk through the woods from the homes of the girls to their house. Uncle J. D. was seeing one girl whose father threatened Uncle J. D. and told him to stay away from his daughter. He did not heed the warning and continued to slip around and see the girl. Late one dark night as Uncle J. D. was going home through the woods, Daddy hid behind a tree and when Uncle J. D. passed him, he shot his shotgun up into the trees over J. D.'s head. Uncle J. D. said it scared him to death, and it didn't take him long to get home, in record time! He thought the girl's father was trying to kill him. I asked my father about this one time and he just grinned and said, "Yes, I got one on J. D. that time." Apparently, Uncle J. D. had played jokes on Daddy many times and Daddy was getting even.

My father must have inherited his love of fishing from his father, because he really liked it as did his father. Daddy could sit on the bank of a creek and fish all day, even if he didn't catch a thing. He would tell me I had no patience when I would get restless and want to leave if nothing had been caught in the first few minutes. Daddy was a good fisherman and caught lots of fish. He enjoyed hunting and fishing all his life. His favorite sport was quail hunting, probably because quail was one of his favorite foods.

When his father died, Daddy being the oldest son by five years became the head of the house. He was twenty-four and Uncle J. D. was nineteen at the time. There were four sisters and one brother younger than J. D. Mattie, the youngest sister, was seven years old.

The year following his father's death, my father and mother married, and they lived at the Ptomey place with grandmother and the younger children.

Mildred, my oldest sister, was born on October 20, 1906

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at PineApple. My mother was having some difficulty with her pregnancy and was staying with Aunt Crete, Daddy's sister, married to A. W. Sills, to be near her doctor who lived in the town of PineApple. Shortly after Mildred's birth, Mama and baby returned home.

Louise, my other sister, was born June 10, 1910 while Mama and Daddy were living in Conecuh County on the McCrory place. Daddy's mother and his brothers and sisters were still living at the John Ptomey place, and Daddy moved back after Louise was born to take care of them. He stayed there until all of his sisters and brothers left after they married.

In 1917, Uncle J. D. bought a farm north of Evergreen next to the Cowart place. My mother's brothers, Aubrey and Elly, were living on the farm when we moved to Conecuh County. They were living in the house where Mama and Daddy married.

We lived next to the Cowarts and Uncle J. D. only one year before we moved to Birmingham when I was three years old. There is a picture of the Cowart house and the farm house where we lived in the Theophilus A. Cowart file. Mama sold her brothers, Aubrey and Elly, her interest in the Cowart place which she had inherited from her mother, when we moved. There is a copy of the deed conveying her interest in the George Kyser Ptomey file.

Uncle J. D. continued to live on his farm until he died. His son Julian now owns the farm as well as the place where we lived.

In 1918, when we moved to Birmingham, we lived in a large three-story house in Fountain Heights. The house was owned by the Orrs, and they rented rooms which they had made into small apartments. Aunt Cile and Uncle Omer also were living there. Daddy had gotten a job with the Tennessee Coal and Iron division of the United States Steel Company at Fairfield. He worked in the Roads and Building Department which was at that time building Fairfield, a town for its employees as they were bringing in a large number of people to work in the mills and there was no adequate housing for them. They were building houses, apartements, office buildings, and a large hospital. Daddy was at first a carpenter and later a labor foreman. Uncle Omer had worked for the Railway Express Company, but had gone to work for the Fairfield Wire Mill before we moved to Birmingham.

Aunt Cile and Uncle Omer bought a house at 2714 Avenue J

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in Ensley about a year after we moved to Fountain Heights, and we moved into a small apartment in this house.

My mother died on February 20, 1921 at St. Vincent Hospital in Birmingham. She had undergone surgery and did not recover from the operation. Dr. D. C. Donald, whose family was from PineApple, was a surgeon in Birmingham, and he performed the operation. Dr. J. G. Donald was my mother's doctor in PineApple, and I think Dr. D. C. Donald was his son. Mildred, who was fifteen and Louise who was eleven when our mother died, kept house for Daddy and cared for me until 1924, when Daddy married again. Grandmother Martha A. Ptomey was with Aunt Cile at the time of my mother's death, and she was a great help to my father. I have many pleasant memories of grandmother as I mentioned earlier.

On March 24, 1924, my father married Alice Tomlinson at Evergreen. She was a sister of Laura Tomlinson, wife of Daddy's brother, J. D. We moved to 502 Oak Place in Fairfield. The house was one built by the T.C.I. Company for employees who purchased the houses on a monthly payment plan.

I finished the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades of junior high school and attended one-half year at the old Fairfield High School and one-half year at the New Fairfield High School the year it was completed. Mildred and Louise married while we were living in Fairfield. Aubrey Cowart, my mother's brother, worked for the T.C.I. Company and lived with us during 1926 and 1927.

In 1929, at the start of the depression, U.S. Steel's building program at Fairfield was greatly curtailed, and many people, including my father, were laid off from their jobs. My father had been assured, when he purchased the house on Oak Place, that his job was permanent, and would last as long as it would take to pay for the house. Nevertheless he was laid off, it was impossible for him to find employment, and he was forced to give up the house. We moved back to Ensley to the apartment in Aunt Cile's house. Daddy was unable to find permanent work. He did have some part-time work, but could not earn enough to live in Birmingham, so in 1931 he moved to a farm at Evergreen. I was going to Ensley High School at the time and stayed with Aunt Cile until I finished high school in 1933. After I finished high school, I lived with Louise for a while and was living with Mildred when I married in 1938.

About the time we moved from Fairfield back to Ensley,

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Aunt Cile, who owned a restaurant in the Birmingham Athletic Club building, found me a job with Mr. Dewey Morris. The B.A.C. was located at Third Avenue and Twenty-Third Street on the north east corner. Across the street on the southwest corner was the Municipal Market building. This was a beautiful building owned by the City of Birmingham. Mr. Morris leased space in the building and operated a fancy fruit and produce retail outlet there. My first job was helping prepare and display the produce, and carrying out packages to the customer's car. I worked twelve hours on the first Saturday and earned \$1.50 which made me very happy. Jobs were almost impossible to get, yet I had a job and still remember how pleased I was to be working. I continued to work on Saturdays for a while, and then worked during high school one-half day and went to school one-half day until I finished high school. I made \$3.50 a week during school, and in the summer I worked full time and earned \$10 a week.

I enjoyed the work with Mr. Morris, who was like a second father to me, and I learned a great deal. On one occasion, I wanted to quit high school and work full time, but he would not let me. He financed my books and school expenses, and encouraged me to finish school. When I attempted to repay Mr. Morris what he had advanced me, he refused to take the money. After high school I worked full time until 1935, when I went to work for the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company. He insisted that I take the job, as he thought it was a good opportunity for me. I would not have taken the job if Mr. Morris had not agreed. He has been a life-long friend, and I still see him when I can. He is retired and eighty-two years old. Dewey Morris is a superb person, has a wonderful personality, is a natural salesman, and a very fine man. He taught me much about people and how to get along with them. He taught me, not so much by words, but by example, and I shall always be grateful to him for his interest and help during my youth.

Mr. A. M. Boone was the manager of the U.S.F.&G. Company's branch office, and his wife Louise was one of Dewey Morris' customers. Mrs. Boone recommended me to her husband, and I was hired as office boy and file clerk in the claims department. The U.S.F.&G. Company is a large multiline insurance company doing business in all of the United States. I immediately liked the insurance business and made it my career. Edwin B. Corley was superintendent of claims and encouraged me to go to law school. For a number of years, I handled insurance claims under the direction of Mr. Corley, who

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was a very smart man, and a good instructor who taught me the insurance business. He and his wife Margaret became close personal friends of my family.

Louise Boone became a close and dear friend of my family, and I am indebted to her and Mr. Boone, and to the Corleys for their help and kindness during my early career.

My father was a quiet, gentle, and kind man. He had a sense of humor, but he was not outgoing. He was pleasant when meeting people, but he seldom would start a conversation. He was not bashful, but reserved. When my wife, Hazel, and I would visit him in Evergreen, he would sometime kid around and tell us amusing incidents about the past. He had a good personality, and it was a pleasure to be around him.

He could not endure quarreling or fussing and disliked violence of any kind. He hated deception and could not stand for anyone to lie to him. He never nagged or fussed, and I cannot remember ever hearing him raise his voice or express violent anger. He was emotional about those he loved, and I can remember seeing him cry. When Mama died, he came home from the hospital and told me that she was gone. Tears rolled down his cheeks as he told me Mama had gone to heaven. I could not understand that she was gone for good, but I did understand that my father was very sad which caused me to cry.

In thinking about my father, I am amazed at the way he handled us kids. None of us were in the least afraid of him. We simply listened when he spoke, and obeyed him. He was an excellent disciplinarian, he spoke softly and with authority, and we obeyed and respected him. The fact that he was not constantly nagging or yelling at us, I am sure, made us feel comfortable around him. He was tolerant and let us have much freedom — up to a point. When he did speak to us, he meant what he said and we acted accordingly.

One time when I was about eight or ten years old, we were living with Aunt Cile, after Mama died. My cousin Martha and I were bickering and fussing in the living room while the adults were talking. Daddy told me to keep quiet. Martha kept talking and "yaking" at me and I returned the chatter. Daddy got up slowly, walked over to where I was sitting, without saying a word or showing any anger and slapped my face. It was not an extremely hard slap, but it did sting and startled me. I was really surprised because he had never done that before. He did not have to do it again; after that

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slap, he had no further trouble with me when he told me to be quiet.

On another occasion when I was about twelve years old after we moved to Fairfield, I developed the habit of staying outside late in the afternoon playing with my friend Forest Crain who lived next door. I was not getting in in time for supper. My stepmother would complain, as it made it hard for her to finish her work. Daddy talked to me and told me that from then on I was to be in the house in time for supper each night. Several days later I slipped back to my old habit and came in after supper was over. My father met me in the living room; he did not raise his voice or seem to be angry. He invited me to the bath room, turned me across his knees, and paddled me soundly with his open hand. It hurt, and my bottom was red for some time. Needless to say, I was not late for supper again.

These are the only two times I can remember my father striking me. It was enough. I cannot remember ever disobeying him after the spanking. I am sure I did, but I don't recall it. It may be that he didn't give too many direct orders for me to disobey. In his way, he knew how to command respect.

After I was about fifteen years old I saw my father only two or three times a year, and then on short occasions. He came to Birmingham for my graduation from Ensley High School. I remember how proud he seemed to be that I had finished high school. I was proud to have him there. I regret that I did not have the opportunity to be with him more during my teenage years.

Martha A. Ptomey, my father's mother, was a devout Baptist and as a young man my father joined the Friendship Baptist Church at PineApple. When we lived in Ensley, we were members of the Ensley Baptist Church. I joined the church at Ensley when I was about ten years old. Aunt Cile and her family were members, and grandmother was a member of the Ensley Baptist Church when she died. I attended Sunday School at Ensley and Fairfield. When Daddy moved back to Evergreen, he and my stepmother joined the Holly Grove Baptist Church. He joined the Masons as a young man in PineApple, and the Masons assisted at his funeral. He is buried at the Witherington Cemetery.

Because Daddy was not aggressive and had a limited education, he had a difficult time making a living after he moved back to Evergreen. He did odd jobs, home repairs, concrete and well work, fence repairs, and

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minor jobs for his neighbors. He drove a school bus for a number of years before his heart attack. This did not set him much, as he had to buy the school bus and pay the operation expenses out of the funds paid him. When I questioned the small amount he was able to retain for the hours he spent, he said "it's better than nothing." He also raised chickens, sold a few eggs, always had a garden, and grew corn and hay for his cows. Although it was a hard living and Daddy had little money, I believe he enjoyed living on the small farm where his son Harlan grew up. He and Harlan were great friends, and I know they enjoyed each other.

When we were living in Ensley after Mama died and when Daddy was a labor foreman, he would work on weekends, Saturday, and Sunday as a watchman on various job sites. It was extra work, but he made extra money for the family. Sometimes, he would take me with him on Saturday, and I had lots of fun playing in sand piles and with the scraps of lumber on the job sites. One time I went to the hospital which was under construction, and I recall how big I thought the building was. This hospital when finished was called Lloyd Nolan Hospital for Dr. Nolan who was the head of the hospital for a long time. A few years later my half-brother, Harlan, was born there.

My father enjoyed smoking although he was not a heavy smoker. Until the depression he smoked ready rolls, Chesterfield cigarettes. During the depression, he rolled his own and liked Prince Albert tobacco in the red tins. He could roll a cigarette with one hand as tight and full as a ready rolled one. I never could learn to do it even though he did his best to teach me after I was grown. I never saw my father take a drink and never heard anyone say that they had seen him take a drink - not even a bottle of beer. Shortly before he died, I was visiting him and saw a pint of whisky in a cabinet in the kitchen. I kidded him and ask if he had been holding out on me. He explained that the whisky was used for medicinal purposes, making Hot Toddies. When he was feeling bad with a cold or the flu, he would take a Hot Toddy. I asked how to make one and he said, "You take a glass of very hot water, add lemon juice, a dash of sugar, and a jigger of whiskey." I never tried it, as it didn't sound too good to me.

About the only recreational pleasure my father ever had was hunting and fishing, and he did quite a bit of both after he moved back to Evergreen. I never went hunting with him, but I did go fishing with him several times. He was still an excellent fisherman and very good with his shotgun in his last years.

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He always enjoyed the radio. He bought his first one when we lived in Fairfield in 1926. The radio was in the living room and the batteries were in the basement. The radio required a wet cell and several dry cell batteries. I would run some small electric motors and lights off of Daddy's batteries in the basement, and sometimes he would wonder why his batteries ran down faster than our neighbors. I told him years later. He listened every Saturday night to the Grand Ole Opry from Nashville. He also liked the sports programs.

My sisters, Mildred and Louise, adored my father. I can remember them combing his hair as he sat relaxed in his chair at night after supper. It was their way of expressing their love for him. He seldom expressed his love with words but more by his tenderness and relaxed attitude with us. There was never any breach in the relationship, no misunderstanding or falling out among us. We all loved him very much and called him "Our Daddy" with pride. My sisters and brother and I enjoy the same kind of relationship; we love and respect each other.

Daddy was not an aggressive man, and after he lost his job in Fairfield, he was not able to provide his family all of the material things he would have liked, but he gave us something more: love, affection, and an example of how to live with integrity and dignity. Honesty and forthrightness were part of his philosophy of life. He did not engage in gossip and was not interested in it. I never heard him say an unkind word about anyone except a superintendent for whom he worked.

This superintendent, Daddy felt, was responsible for his being laid off from his job. This man had a habit of sending Daddy and his labor crew to his home, on company time, to make repairs and additions to his home, using company materials. He was using company labor and materials for personal gain and Daddy did not approve. He was of the opinion that superintendent knew that he did not approve of his actions. I suspect that Daddy had in some way conveyed his feeling to this man. Daddy always thought he had been laid off so that he would not report the superintendent. He had some hard words and very bitter feelings about this man.

The example our father set for us is appreciated by all of his children. We are grateful and cherish his memory.

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forms for concrete. It was extremely hot, he was completely exhausted and passed out. It was at first thought that he has suffered heat prostration. Later it was discovered that he was the victim of angina pectoris. He was partially disabled but did not suffer extreme pain. He woke up during the night complaining of severe pains and nausea, and died within a short time. My sisters and I had planned to visit him on Thanksgiving Day which was about two weeks away; instead we went to Evergreen for his funeral.

My father was very sad and lonely after my mother's death. I can remember his loneliness, although at the time I did not know what was bothering him. He had nothing except his work and his children, and he seldom smiled. I, too, missed my mother without knowing it. I started to school shortly after my mother's death, and Aunt Cile went with me the first day of school. I was glad to have her with me, but I can remember the other children with their mothers and I felt that I had been cheated because my mother was not there. I continued to have this feeling for a long time. I can now appreciate my father's unhappiness after my mother died.

Daddy remarried in 1924, and I was glad to have a mother even if she was a stepmother. My father and stepmother were happy, and I am thankful for her as she brought happiness to him. My stepmother was fifteen years younger than my father; she loved him very much and cared for him tenderly in his last years. She lives in Andalusia, Alabama with her son Harlan and is still active at the age of eighty-six (1982).